



directing council

PAN AMERICAN
SANITARY
ORGANIZATION

IX Meeting

Antigua Guatemala
September 1956

regional committee

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

VIII Meeting



CD9/24 (Eng.)
17 September 1956
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL SESSION
OF THE IX MEETING OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL

Provisional Chairman: Dr. Juan Allwood Paredes (El Salvador),
First Vice-Chairman of the VIII Meeting
of the Directing Council

The inaugural session of the IX Meeting of the Directing Council took place on Sunday, 16 September, at 10:45 a.m., in the Auditorium of the National Conservatory in Guatemala City, with the cabinet ministers and authorities of Guatemala and representatives of the diplomatic and consular corps in Guatemala in attendance.

His Excellency the President of the Republic, Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas, after being formally received, assumed the chair and was joined on the rostrum by the First Vice-President of the Congress of the Republic, Dr. Salvador Ortega Castellanos; the President of the Judiciary Body, Miguel Ortiz Pasarelli; the Provisional Chairman of the IX Meeting of the Directing Council and Representative of El Salvador, Dr. Juan Allwood Paredes; the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, Dr. Fred L. Soper; and the Assistant Director and Acting Secretary General of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, Dr. Carlos Luis González, Secretary of the meeting.

After the national anthem of Guatemala was played to a standing audience, His Excellency the President of the Republic delivered the opening

address, which was received with repeated ovations (the text of the address appears in Annex I).

An address by the Minister of Public Health and Welfare of Guatemala, Dr. Carlos Soza Barillas, followed and was greeted with warm applause (Annex II).

The Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, Dr. Fred L. Soper, delivered the next address, which was also warmly applauded (Annex III).

The Minister of Public Health and Representative of Colombia, Dr. Gabriel Velázquez Palau, then took the floor and on behalf of the representatives to the IX Meeting of the Directing Council replied to the address of His Excellency the President of the Republic. Dr. Velázquez Palau received a prolonged ovation at the end of his address (Annex IV).

The national anthem was again played and the inaugural session of the IX Meeting of the Directing Council came to a close at 11:30 a.m.

ANNEXES: I, II, III, IV

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA,
COLONEL CARLOS CASTILLO ARMAS

The Republic of Guatemala today enjoys the privilege of being host to the distinguished delegations from its sister republics of this Hemisphere, from Canada, and from three European nations, who have come here for the first time in order to continue in their efforts in behalf of the health of the peoples of America.

This meeting takes place primarily under the auspices of the Pan American Sanitary Organization, which over more than fifty years has built up a beneficent and fruitful tradition of untiring and noble efforts to prevent the spread of communicable diseases from one country to another and, in general, to improve the health of mankind in America. Through this Organization, the solidarity and the spirit of cooperation of the American States for the benefit of their peoples have found tangible expression.

This meeting is also held under the auspices of the World Health Organization, which, although founded as recently as 1946, has been carrying out a monumental task in all corners of the world, in compliance with the principle set forth in its Constitution--that all people should enjoy the highest attainable standard of health, this being "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

The health of the people, especially health in the broader sense as defined in the Constitution of the World Health Organization, is one of the

major concerns of my Government. A sickly people cannot be happy or prosperous. Sanitary living conditions are an indispensable prior requirement if we are to have economic, social, and cultural conditions that are compatible with human dignity. For that reason, the primary task of every State and the subject of international endeavor should be environmental sanitation, the eradication of endemic diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, which seriously undermine the physical and moral stamina of the inhabitants of these tropical regions. There is no doubt that the physical, mental, and social well-being of the individual is the basis of national well-being.

Within our modest resources and with the aid of such noble international organizations as the United Nations--particularly UNICEF--the World Health Organization, the Pan American Sanitary Organization, and the United States International Cooperation Administration, the Government of Guatemala is engaged in carrying out earnest and effective campaigns of public health and sanitation, health and hygiene. We have started a vast campaign for the eradication of malaria, and we are confident that, within a few years, this main enemy of our lowland farmers will have been completely conquered. For the first time in our country, the effective prevention of tuberculosis, another implacable enemy of our people, is being achieved by systematic vaccination throughout the country. We are waging an active fight against polio and cancer by programs that are now well advanced; health conditions in extensive areas of the national territory have been improved; and the indispensable health and preventive practices are being inculcated, especially

in our indigenous peoples. These campaigns are supplemented by intensive programs for the improvement of the nutrition of Guatemalans, particularly of children and mothers. In addition to UNICEF, the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama is cooperating with the Government in these efforts.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm the complete concurrence of my Government in, and its support of, the very praiseworthy work of the World Health Organization and the Pan American Sanitary Organization. The fact that Guatemala has been chosen as the seat of the current meetings not only is a source of gratitude to us, but is eloquent proof of the devotion of this country to the humanitarian activities of these institutions that are working for the health of our peoples.

It is with particular pleasure that I declare open the IX Meeting of the Directing Council of the Pan American Sanitary Organization and VIII Meeting of the Regional Committee of the World Health Organization, and I am happy to extend, on behalf of the people and Government of Guatemala, a most cordial welcome to the distinguished representatives of the Member States of these laudable institutions. I trust that their stay among us will be most pleasant. May I express my most sincere wishes for the success of your deliberations and my hope that they will have positive results for the improvement of the physical, mental, and social conditions of the American people.

Thank you,

ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH
AND WELFARE OF GUATEMALA, DR. CARLOS SOZA BARILLAS

The International Sanitary Conferences held in Paris in 1851 and 1859, that is to say practically a century ago, give us an idea of how long nearly all the countries of the world have been concerned with public health. This concern, strong and manifold, clearly manifests man's strong desire to preserve health and prolong life, in the continuous and unceasing struggle against disease and death. I can therefore say that an international meeting such as this, which is being held in the patriotic month of September and in one of the oldest capitals in America, is carrying on a century-old tradition. For while the indomitable urge to exist and survive in the face of enemy diseases came into being primarily with man himself, it was not until he created groups of like-minded men and organizations holding similar principles that a real, all-embracing, and collective effort could be made.

It might be said that, chronologically, the hundred-year tradition applies only to international events in the Old World, since with respect to the New World, our single-minded and progressive America, international gatherings on public health go back only half a century, for the first was held in Washington in 1902. While in one sense our technical meetings are centuries old and in another only half a century, we take pride and satisfaction in the knowledge that, on purely technical public health grounds, our progress and scope compares favorably with that of the various

organizations. It should be made clear that we are not attempting to judge the value of the various agencies to mankind strictly by the number of years they have been in existence; rather we are evaluating the quality of each organization by its dynamic and functional age and by the social and humanistic importance of its activities. The nations of the world therefore possess a valuable treasure in such important organizations as the World Health Organization and the Pan American Sanitary Organization, which together, dominated by a single ideal, are helping, in all countries, in all climates, and at all seasons, to liberate mankind from universal ills.

Gentlemen: Guatemala, your country in brotherhood and ours in its trials and problems, is proud to be host to these meetings, because it knows that they are shaping, indirectly, apart from political and sectarian considerations, a better destiny for our nations. This better destiny is based on the improvement of society through health, health being understood to be not only an individual attribute but also a collective right and a duty of the State toward its people.

In conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to say that, like my people, the Government of Liberation feels honored at your presence here for it understands the message of improvement, of technical strength, and of international brotherhood that you bring in your minds and in your hearts. You should feel, in this city, that here you are laying a historical cornerstone, that you are building, for future generations, a world of physical, mental, and spiritual health. I hope that my words will

convey to you my most sincere wishes, in my threefold capacity as man, physician, and public servant, that your mental and physical efforts will result in winning a happy future for all the nations of the world.

ADDRESS BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE PAN AMERICAN
SANITARY BUREAU, DR. FRED L. SOPER

I should like first to present to Your Excellency the President of the Republic, to your Government and people, on behalf of Dr. Marcolino Gómez Candau, Director-General of the World Health Organization, and on my own behalf, our most cordial greeting and our sincere gratitude for the hospitality that has been extended to us.

It is regrettable that, owing to urgent and unforeseen circumstances, Dr. Candau, while on his way here, found it necessary to cancel his visit to this city. Dr. Candau had already reached New York when he was forced to return to Geneva.

The presence of Dr. Candau would have further emphasized the fact that the Pan American Sanitary Organization also serves as one of the six regional organizations of the World Health Organization, whose governing bodies have already met or are meeting this month in different parts of the world.

The Directing Council of the Pan American Sanitary Organization is meeting today in this hospitable and noble country, where Mayan culture gave birth to one of the very early and most splendid of civilizations. The generosity of the Guatemalan Government will make it possible for the deliberations of the public health workers of the Americas to take place in what was formerly the Royal and Pontifical University of San Carlos in Antigua Guatemala.

Guatemala has always shown the keenest interest in collaborating with the neighboring countries of the Western Hemisphere to achieve our fundamental aim, which is "to combat disease, lengthen life, and promote the physical and mental health of the people." As an example of that collaboration, may I point out that in this city is located the large, modern building of the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama, constructed through the efforts of the Guatemalan Government. Here, too, are the headquarters of the Zone III Office of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, through which our organization maintains close contact with the governments of Central America and Panama.

The organized effort of the American peoples in the field of international health, which today finds expression in the Pan American Sanitary Organization, has a history going back almost fifty-four years. What is today the Pan American Sanitary Bureau dates from 1902, when it was established as a permanent agency; it acquired a firmer legal foundation in 1924 with the signing of the Pan American Sanitary Code, a treaty ratified by the governments of the twenty-one American republics; and it assumed its present form with the adoption of the Constitution of the Pan American Sanitary Organization in 1947 and the signing of agreements with the World Health Organization in 1949 and the Organization of American States in 1950. It has thus been possible to unite, under a single administration, the international health activities of all the political units of the Americas.

The Directing Council of the Pan American Sanitary Organization, which also serves as the Regional Committee of the World Health Organization, is now meeting to review the work accomplished and to study the activities to be carried out in 1957 by its operating agency, the Pan American Sanitary Bureau.

Acting in accordance with the standards, objectives, and long-range programs established by the governing bodies of the Organization, the Bureau works in close collaboration with the health authorities of the Member Governments, which have the final responsibility for the health of their peoples. This work has three main facets: the development and improvement of basic and permanent public health services, both central and local; the education and training of public health personnel; and the fight against communicable diseases, particularly those for which adequate means of eradication are now available. These three great fields of action may be described in just three words: integration, education and eradication. All the activities carried out in 1955, those begun in 1956, and those planned for 1957 and 1958, which the Directing Council will consider at this meeting, fall within these three working principles, which are applied in varying degrees with respect to one another, so that they may be adjusted to the public health programs of the individual country and to the continental or regional scope of public health problems.

It is to discuss the continuation of this work, which I have just described in broad outline, that the IX Meeting of the Directing Council of the Pan American Sanitary Organization is being held here under these

most favorable auspices. The realization of the objectives of the Organization is the fundamental aim of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, which I have had the honor to direct since 1947. I can state with pride that the Bureau has devoted itself exclusively to the task of public health, that it has assumed important technical and advisory responsibilities, and that it is in a position to increase its collaboration, if the governments of the Americas so decide, in order to work more effectively and constructively for the health of all the peoples, a condition fundamental to peace and security, not only in this Hemisphere but throughout the world.

I could not close these few remarks without offering my best wishes for the happiness, well-being, and health of the people of Guatemala, and expressing to their government, in the person of His Excellency the President, our most sincere gratitude for the hospitality extended to us, which has made us feel at home, among friends, the family of American nations.

ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH OF COLOMBIA,
DR. GABRIEL VELAZQUEZ PALAU, ON BEHALF OF
THE DELEGATIONS TO THE MEETING

At the request of the Executive Committee of the Pan American Sanitary Organization, I have the honor, Your Excellency the President of the Republic, to extend to you the warm greetings of the representatives of the countries participating in the IX Meeting of the Directing Council of the Pan American Sanitary Organization, VIII Meeting of the Regional Committee of the World Health Organization, and to reply to your eloquent and significant address.

What a splendid expression of faith in the destiny of America is this renewed understanding among the distinguished sanitarians gathered here to affirm once again, fervently and cordially, their absolute conviction that the effort to achieve the physical, mental, and social well-being of the people is the surest road to the development and progress of nations.

It is indeed a privilege that "the Most Noble and Most Loyal City of the Knights of St. James of Guatemala" should delight us with its natural beauty, its traditional cordiality, and that the stimulating and resolute spirit of its citizens should encourage us to take another step forward here for the solution of the great health problems still faced by the majority of the nations of America.

Gentlemen, that spirit of solidarity which is so essential to common endeavors in the field of health is one that has existed since a very early time. And, carrying on the effort of those who, since the second half of the nineteenth century, have brought about historical developments in the field of world health, we have gathered again today in this beautiful and hospitable corner of the American Continent, we who hold the conviction that health is the most sacred right of mankind, a heritage that we have the duty to maintain. If we were to lose that heritage, man's activity would weaken and, as Your Excellency has just so well stated, the economic potential of nations would decline. Equally convinced that the development and the culture of a country go hand in hand with the state of its health, we feel great satisfaction in seeing the work of your Government, which is guided and strengthened primarily by principles that are the mainstay of progress and the earners of the people's gratitude: public health work, advancement of education, and expansion of agriculture. I have wished to make brief mention of this point, Gentlemen, because, at the kind invitation of the President of the Republic, I had the pleasure of attending, a few days ago in Quetzaltenango, the formal inauguration of services in these three basic activities, which must be considered as the surest means of advancing a nation.

The Pan American Sanitary Bureau was created under international law in 1902, as the result of the concern felt throughout the American Continent. You are all familiar with the fundamental objectives of our organization and

the important place it occupies in the international field, and with the projects and programs it has conducted and is conducting throughout the Hemisphere. We all recognize the value of our Organization for the peoples of America and we must all endeavor to assure its future on an increasingly prosperous basis.

We also know that the activities of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau were at first confined to the exchange of information, the provision of advisory services, and the dissemination of public health principles. But even then, and despite its limited economic resources, the Bureau achieved a remarkable record of accomplishment in coping with such problems as bubonic plague. After this early period, and under the firm leadership of Dr. Hugh Cumming, the Bureau embarked on a course that led it to greater prestige. Later, in 1924, with the signing of the Pan American Sanitary Code in Havana, it strengthened its international juridical status.

In 1945, at the famous San Francisco Conference, when Souza, of Brazil, and Szeming Sze, of China, put forward the idea of creating a world-wide health organization, the Pan American Sanitary Bureau had already achieved remarkable success in the American countries and had gained recognition of what it had accomplished for the noblest cause that men can cherish: health. As the result of the XII Pan American Sanitary Conference in Caracas, and thanks to the untiring and persistent efforts of Dr. Fred L. Soper, its programs were expanded and the governments lent it more extensive and decisive support.

The work of the Pan American Sanitary Organization has been courageous and beneficial. This fact was acknowledged when, under the Agreement of 24 May 1949, the World Health Organization made the PASO its regional organization for the Americas, a status that gave strong impetus to its programs and main objectives.

Our Organization is going through its most important phase: it has gone beyond the stage of control of diseases and is entering fully into the stage based on the concept of eradication. The scourges that threaten humanity know no frontiers and their power is such that no country can fight them alone; we must therefore undertake continent-wide action that will permit us, by mobilizing and coordinating resources, to assure the continuing progress of public health in America.

Allow me, Your Excellency, in the name of the representatives to this IX Meeting of the Directing Council of the Pan American Sanitary Organization, VIII Meeting of the Regional Committee of the World Health Organization -- all men of good will, conscious of their great responsibility and earnest in their endeavor to bring health to the people, a condition essential to peace and security -- to extend to you our deep feeling of appreciation for the generous hospitality of your Government and your people, and to express to you our personal esteem.